



Earth Day

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Why in News

Every year, **22nd April** is celebrated as Earth Day to raise public awareness about the environment and inspire people to save and protect it.

The **theme** for the year 2021 '**Restore Our Earth**' examines **natural processes, emerging green technologies and innovative thinking** that can restore the world's ecosystems.

Key Points

- **Background:**

- Earth Day was **first observed in 1970**, when 20 million took to the streets to protest against environmental degradation on the call of **US Senator Gaylord Nelson**.

The event was **triggered by the 1969 Santa Barbara oil spill**, as well as other issues such as smog and polluted rivers.

- In **2009**, the **United Nations** designated 22nd April as '**International Mother Earth Day**'.

- **About:**

- Earth Day is now **globally coordinated by EARTHDAY.ORG**, which is a non profit organisation. It was **formerly known as Earth Day Network**.
- It aims to "**build the world's largest environmental movement** to drive transformative change for people and the planet."
- It recognizes a **collective responsibility**, as called for in the **1992 Rio Declaration (Earth Summit)**, to promote harmony with nature and the Earth to achieve a just balance among the economic, social and environmental needs of present and future generations of humanity.
- The landmark **Paris Agreement**, which brings almost 200 countries together in setting a common target to reduce global greenhouse emissions, was also signed on Earth Day 2016.

Other Important Days

- 22nd March: **World Water Day**
- 22nd April: Earth Day
- 22nd May : **World Biodiversity Day**
- 5th June: **World Environment Day**
- **Earth Overshoot Day**

Earth Hour

- **Earth Hour** is the **World Wildlife Fund for Nature (WWF)**'s annual initiative that **began in 2007**. It is **held every year on the last Saturday of March**.
- It encourages people from more than 180 countries to **switch off the lights from 8.30 pm to 9.30 pm** as per their local time.

Source: IE